

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 18 January 1969



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
18 JANUARY 1969

1. South Vietnam

Ky is planning to return to Paris next week. He [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] wants to meet with Ambassador Lodge now that the table question has been resolved. Ky hopes to get back to Saigon for the Tet holidays in mid-February.

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2. Soviet Union

Soyuz 5 is back on earth and its pilot has been safely recovered. There are tentative indications that the ship had some difficulty during de-orbit, but it is too soon to reach any conclusion on this aspect of its flight.

3. Peru

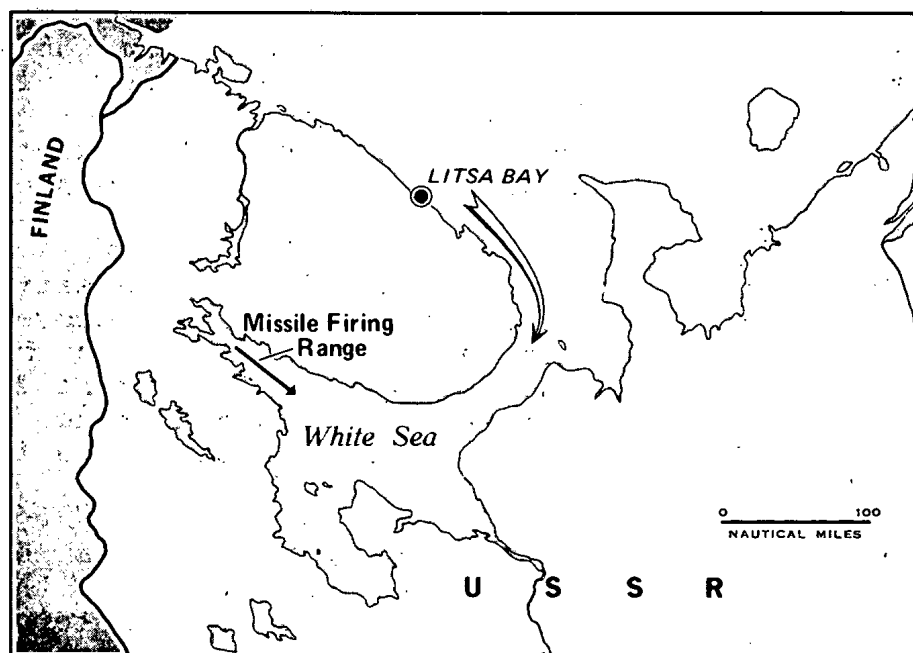
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New Soviet Attack Submarine Involved in White Sea Missile Firing



Soviet C-class nuclear-powered torpedo attack submarine, seen entering White Sea 3 days prior to 20 July 1968 missile firing.



C-class submarine berthed at the Litsa Bay submarine base. Eight missile launch tubes are visible at bow.

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4. Soviet Union

[redacted] last July the Soviets test fired a new type of short-range missile from their "C-class" nuclear attack submarine.

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Possibly as many as three missiles were fired in the White Sea, up to a range of 35 miles. We do not know whether the missiles are intended for use against surface ships or submarines.

The Soviets now have three of the "C-class" submarines operational in their northern fleet, but so far they have not left Soviet waters.

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[redacted] photography indicates that this vessel has eight missile tubes.

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It looks as if the Soviets have completed their second antisubmarine helicopter carrier--the Leningrad. It now may be getting ready for a trial run on the Black Sea. It took nearly a year to shake down the Moskva, the Soviets' only other helicopter carrier, prior to its initial voyage into the Mediterranean last September.

5. Spain - Soviet Union

Franco has been trying to persuade the Soviets for two months to use Spanish ports, rather than Gibraltar, for resupply of their ships and fishing boats. The idea is to impair the Rock's economy as part of the effort to drive the British out. The Spaniards are trying to keep their dalliance with the Soviets quiet while the Gibraltar issue is being considered by the United Nations and while negotiations on US bases in Spain are in progress. We do not yet know how the Soviets have responded to the Spanish ploy.

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6. Venezuela-Guyana

Disappointed Venezuelan officials are determined to press their claim on the Essequibo region of Guyana, despite the failure of the rebellion they instigated there two weeks ago.

No longer denying their government's complicity, these officials are privately indicating they intend to stir up the local population and step up their psychological warfare against the Guyanese Government. The irridentists care little about international reaction, believing that neither the Organization of American States nor the United Nations can stop them.

Incoming President Caldera is under pressure to support this operation after he assumes office in March. He is reluctant to talk about it to US officials, perhaps an indication that he has not yet made up his mind whether to go along.

In the meantime, the Guyanese are continuing mopping up operations with circumspection and without undue rough stuff--Venezuelan propaganda about atrocities notwithstanding. Only 28 persons have been brought before magistrates so far.

7. Jordan

Students have called a strike for today to protest a proposed conscription law, which they interpret as being designed to keep them from joining the terrorists. If the demonstration is successful, Husayn may modify the draft law in hopes of reducing dissent. He cannot eliminate popular support for the guerrillas, however.

8. Arab Guerrillas

The Kuwaitis may have set a precedent that other Arab governments will find hard to ignore. They have decided to make their support of Arab guerrillas an official part of their budget.

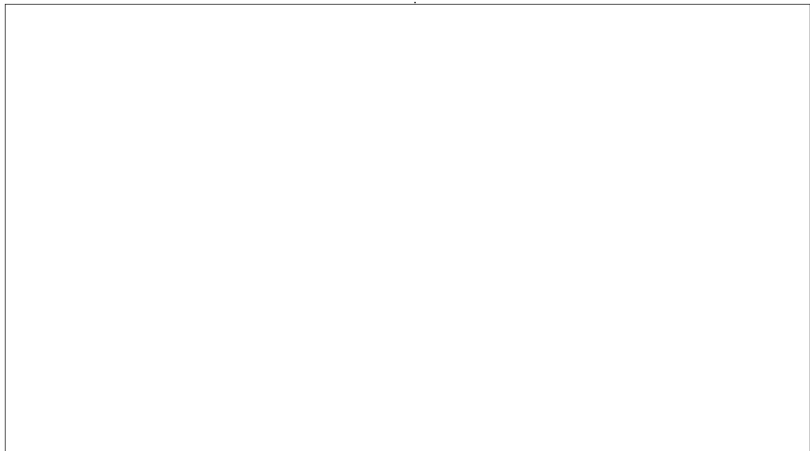
The cabinet has decided on a minimum expenditure of \$8.4 million in fiscal 1969. Previously the Palestinian terrorists were supported in Arab countries by voluntary public subscription, private donations, and various small semiofficial imposts on incomes or sales.

9. Berlin

As we expected, the Soviets are gradually stepping up the intensity of their protests as the 5 March date draws closer for the election of the next Federal president in West Berlin. Soviet ambassadors in Bonn and in East Berlin warned last week that the election was provocative and might draw reprisals. So far, we think this is just talk, while the Soviets make up their minds on how they will react.

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10. Canada



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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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18 January 1969

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Austria Being Urged to Recognize Hanoi: The Soviet Union and several other Communist countries reportedly have urged Austria to follow Sweden's lead in recognizing North Vietnam, claiming that this is a proper course of action for all neutral countries. This advice, according to Austrian Foreign Minister Waldheim, has so far been in moderate key. He asserted, however, that Austria "of course" has no intention of recognizing North Vietnam. There is no indication that the Communists have exerted similar pressure yet on other European neutrals such as Finland and Switzerland, but both governments have recently disclaimed publicly any intention of recognizing Hanoi.

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Propaganda on Talks: Communist propaganda is taking a tough line on the eve of the opening of the procedural talks in Paris, according to Western news services. Having failed to get any significant recognition of Liberation Front status with the agreement on procedural meetings, the Communists in both Hanoi and Paris are now bearing down hard on this issue in preparation for the next phase of the talks. The Hanoi daily Nhan Dan insisted progress in the talks is "definitely, certainly, and completely impossible" so long as the US refuses to "officially recognize and negotiate with" the Front. This point was also high on a list of priority demands issued by the Liberation Front at a news conference in Paris on the 17th.

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Comments of Mai Van Bo: When he was asked recently if political and military matters should be settled separately or concurrently, Hanoi's permanent Paris representative dismissed proposals along these

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lines. He said these were "beside the point, delaying tactics, foggy thinking...and a waste of time." The main thing, Bo said, is for the North Vietnamese and Americans to sit down together and talk about the future of South Vietnam. He described the Communists as "open minded and full of serious intent." He claimed this had been so for over six months. When the Americans "mean business" and are ready to talk about a compromise solution acceptable "to us and to them," he said, "they will find us ready to talk."

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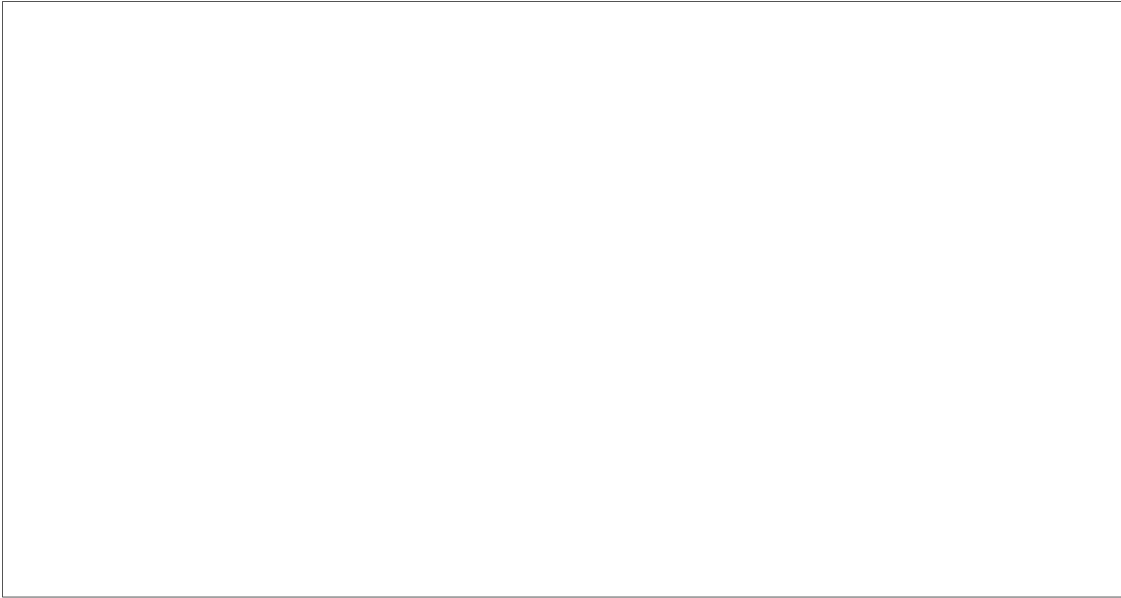
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

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